

from Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC

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**For Immediate Release**

## NNSA Breaks Ground on Tritium Facilities at SRS

*New buildings mark the start for eliminating costly cold war-era operating facilities at the Savannah River Site*

AIKEN, S.C. (November 3, 2011) – Officials from the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Defense Programs and the NNSA Savannah River Site Office recently broke ground on two new buildings at the Savannah River Site (SRS) in Aiken, S.C.

The two buildings will relocate personnel from prime tritium process real estate, enabling the next steps in the Tritium Responsive Infrastructure Modifications (TRIM) program, a plan to remove processes and equipment from Cold War-era buildings into more modern facilities that provide enhanced security and advanced technologies to support the facility mission.



On hand for the formal groundbreaking were (from right) NNSA Savannah River Site Office Manager Doug Dearolph; NNSA Savannah River Site Office Assistant Manager for Facilities and Projects Roxanne Jump; NNSA Assistant Deputy Administrator for Nuclear Safety, Nuclear Operations and Governance Reform Jim McConnell; NNSA Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Military Application Brigadier General Sandra Finan; Akima Construction Services President Paul Karmazinski; Savannah River Nuclear Solutions Executive Vice President Fred Dohse; and Project Liaison Sandy Harris.

*The Savannah River Site is owned by the U.S. Department of Energy and is managed and operated by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC.*

In addition to the two new buildings, the ten year TRIM program includes consolidation of existing processes and facilities, deployment of new technology and process equipment, and decontamination and decommissioning of the old structures. Implementation of this effort will result in an overall lifecycle cost reduction and assurance of continued safe and secure national security tritium mission at SRS.

“Today we’re here to break ground on facilities that show the national commitment, and the NNSA’s commitment, to modernizing our nuclear enterprise.” said NNSA Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Military Application, Brigadier General Sandra Finan, who participated in the ceremony.

“Today is a historic day, but what you do every single day is just as historic. I am very proud and honored to be here to share this with you today,” said General Finan. “But more importantly, I’m very proud to be associated with what you do every single day, and thank you for your dedicated service. ”

The Process Support Building is a 10,000 square-foot building that will house forty-seven tenants and replace offices, briefing rooms and control room simulators from other buildings. The Tritium Engineering Building will consolidate the engineering function into a single 16,000 square-foot structure, accommodating 94 personnel. Both buildings will be constructed through a contract with Akima Construction Services, LLC, and are scheduled to be completed by October 2012.

Future projects within the TRIM program will relocate and modernize operational process equipment, allowing deactivation and decommissioning of several 1950’s era structures.

Tritium is a heavy isotope of hydrogen and a key component of nuclear weapons, but it decays radioactively at the rate of 5.5 percent each year and must be replenished periodically. This is accomplished by recycling tritium from existing warheads and by extracting tritium from target rods irradiated in nuclear reactors that are operated by the Tennessee Valley Authority. Recycled and extracted gases are purified to produce tritium that is suitable for use. The SRS Tritium Facilities occupy approximately 29 acres in the northwest portion of H Area. Operations began in 1955.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science in the nation’s national security enterprise. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability, and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; reduces the global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC, is a Fluor-led partnership comprised of Fluor, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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